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lost their elasticity; he had no desire to be useful; being so long without any object in view but his own gratification, he now cared for nothing else. He was unused to reflection, and was only actuated by the feelings of the moment. The first effervescence of gratitude had long since subsided, and he received the intelligence of changing his place of abode, with a forced politeness, though obviously with ill-humour and discontent; his friend now perceived that he had acted imprudently by inducing Morland to spend the prime of his life in idleness, and perceiving his sentiments by his looks, encouraged him to employ his present time in making up for so much leisure.—They parted but not cordially; necessity made Morland exert himself, and it was long before he out-grew the bad habits he had acquired. His friend was soon forgotten. The advice Stanley had given Morland at the last parting more than counterbalanced the years of satisfaction he had passed. Had Morland possessed a sounder judgment, and given himself time to reflect, he would not have felt such lively feelings of gratitude at first; he would perceive his friend's benevolent heart was gratified by treating him kindly, and he would have endeavoured to be useful to his benefactor while he resided with him, and have used every exertion to get into some employment however trifling, as much for the sake of making himself an useful member of the community, as of becoming independent; not to lessen his debt of gratitude to his friend, but to be better satisfied with himself. Z.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

THE TRIUMPHS OF WAR....A DIALOGUE.

AS I was riding along the high-road a few days ago with a newspaper in my hand, reading the *glorious exploits* of some of our great men, I overtook a girl with a child on her back, hardly able to walk; the following dialogue took place.—

Gentleman. Where are you going my good girl, you seem sadly tired?

Girl. I am going to the County Tyrone, sir.

Gentleman. Where is your husband?

Girl. He is gone to Spain, and I have not a farthing to support myself and poor child that is now crying on my back with hunger; and what is worse, I am sure I shall never see my husband again, for there is such dreadful tidings in the newspaper. The army have suffered the greatest distress in Spain (tears ran down her cheeks as she spoke.)

I gave her a trifle and rode on, and began to read, but the news which had before appeared so glorious, now filled me with horror. I thought of the many poor creatures left widows and orphans merely to gratify the unfeeling cravings of ambition.

M.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON MEDIOCRITY.

I AM particularly fond of seeing mediocrity well applied. By mediocrity, I mean a person who possesses moderate talents and moderate fortune, contributing moderately to his happiness. His talents must neither be wasted in idleness, nor extravagantly lavished by affecting to show more genius than he really possesses. In the one case he is generally reputed stupid and really becomes so; in the other he renders himself ridiculous after a short flourish. But if all is managed well, a man with a tolerable understanding may gain a good stock of wisdom, and be a reasonable, instructive companion. With a moderate taste, well directed under the guidance of that understanding, he will feel real pleasure himself, and afford pleasure to others.

With moderate wealth he can benefit the poor, and render his household comfortable; by indulging no immoderate expectations and hopes, the occurrences of life will make him moderately happy. A man, thus directed by reason, will possess far more happiness, than the man whose mind is more richly furnished, and who has more wealth, but who manages badly. Is it not a more pleasing sight to see a small, plain house, kept neat, than a large, highly ornamented

mansion running to ruin? The consideration of well managed mediocrity makes us perceive that it is in the power of all to be sufficiently wise, agreeable and useful. The same reasoning may be applied to personal beauty, which is not long engaging except it be accompanied by a good, pleasing countenance. Our feelings also ought to be well regulated; unless they are so, we can be of no more advantage to our friends, than if we were unfeeling. Even moderate talents are not necessary to render us amiable or useful. It, like Sir Hugh Tyrold, in Miss Burney's excellent novel of "Camilla," the heart be full of goodness and kindness the head may be void, and thus goodness unbounded by reason, may be hurtful to our friends.

Let us be highly gifted, or moderately gifted, we must make the best use of our talents, if we expect to be durably useful. A man of the largest fortune may, by extravagance, become a beggar, and a man of the finest talents act unbecomingly the dignity of a philosopher.

E.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

AN ESSAY ON READING, ADDRESSED TO
THE LADIES.

ALTHOUGH books make one of the chief means of acquiring knowledge, yet knowledge is seldom acquired by them in the degree that it ought to be. I impute this failure equally to the choice of books, and the manner of using them. It requires no little judgment to select our studies, and no little industry to profit by them. Young ladies ought to be particularly careful in choosing the subjects of their reading; they have much leisure for reading, and on that account books have a great share in their meditations, and strongly influence their characters. Many young ladies, I must acknowledge, have such a strong reliance on their personal charms, that they think it useless to take much pains for the embellishment of their minds; to such persons I have little to say, the brightness of their eyes, and the elegance of their complexion may

inflict a few slight wounds, but the dullness of their understandings, and the poverty of their conversation will cure them speedily, except the lovers are only a few degrees removed from idiots. I shall therefore address myself to those ladies who are sensible of the importance of learning, and who think that the brightest personal charms may receive additional lustre from the improvement of the mind, the attainment of useful knowledge, and the command of elegant language.

The first regulation of a lady's library ought to be the exclusion of novels and romances. Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," Johnson's "Rasselas," "Don Quixotte," "The Adventures of Telemachus," and a few others may remain. The generality of novels are as contemptible in a literary point of view, as hurtful in a moral one; the ideas they contain are mostly far fetched, the expressions ridiculous, and the language such as can excite nothing but contempt. Novels occasion a dreadful loss of time, they spoil the taste of their readers, they unbend the mind in the most unfavourable manner, and too often hurt the morals. The manner in which they attempt sublimity, pathos, or elegance is a fine specimen of the burlesque style; their elegance is affected, their pathos laughable, and their sublimity bombast.

There are books enough that are well worthy our perusal without engaging in the endless round of novel reading. I call it an endless round, because it is a "never ending, still beginning" task, and on account of the sameness of language, ideas, and adventures, which pervades them all, the novel-reader is engaged in a perpetual round of nonsense.

A taste not vitiated by this species of reading, would not only find more advantage, but more pleasure in books of history, biography, geography, and travels. A selection of such works, with due intermixture of scientific, moral and poetical books, would by proper reading, produce a very different effect than what we daily see on the generality of readers.

I.